



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/697,674	10/29/2003	Philip F. Lanza fame	1211-4-3	8402

996 7590 08/29/2005

GRAYBEAL, JACKSON, HALEY LLP
155 - 108TH AVENUE NE
SUITE 350
BELLEVUE, WA 98004-5901

EXAMINER

THOMPSON, HUGH B

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3634

DATE MAILED: 08/29/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/697,674

Applicant(s)

LANZAFAME, PHILIP F.

Examiner

Hugh B. Thompson II

Art Unit

3634

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 June 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-41 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 5-39 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 41 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 40 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-4 and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

With respect to claims 1 and 3, the phrase “non-adjustably/non-adjustable position” presents an ambiguity in that the structure “hand releasably” mates with the leveler, this function suggesting some sort of adjustment of conditions and/or positions of the leveler attachment structure with respect to the ladder leveler. Note that the applicant has failed to define the type of non-adjustable movement (or location thereof) to exclude a hand releasable mating with the leveler as the claim states.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-4 and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by King #5,704,451. King discloses a ladder leveler assembly, as best seen in Figures 5 and 6, comprised of a ladder 12, a ladder leveler (lower portion of Figure 6) *having static portions 32, 34, 36*, a

Art Unit: 3634

leveler attachment base/plate 20, a *hand releasable* leveler attachment structure/movable latch/locking device/mating structure 64 *that can be fixed in a specific position*, a locking pin 72, which is received within a slot/attachment surface (unnumbered), catchment surfaces 36 that allow the leveler to be placed in at least 6 vertically displaced positions, and safety locks/pins/bolts 22.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 5-39 are allowed.

Claim 40 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The primary reason for the allowable subject matter of claim 40, is the inclusion of the locking pin mounted to the static portion of the leveler. For claims 5, 16, and 27, the reasons for allowance is the inclusion of the leveler mating structure of the base having two mating surfaces (leveler attachment surfaces) that restrain the leveler attachment structure against movement in five of the six directions and the catchment surface that restrains the leveler attachment structure against movement in the sixth direction. The prior art of record fails to teach or suggest the claimed features absent the applicant's own disclosure.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-4 and 40 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Specifically, the applicant now recited the leveler having a static portion and a non-adjustable/hand releasable mating of the mating structure. See claims 1 and 3. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

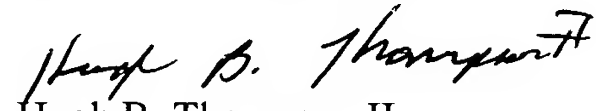
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hugh B. Thompson II whose telephone number is (571) 272-6837. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday 9 am to 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Chilcot can be reached on (571) 272-6777. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 3634

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Hugh B. Thompson II
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3634

August 22, 2005